

image

19

\$3.50

**BRITAIN'S
GREATEST
HERO!**

**A
PAUL GRIST
COMIC!**

Jack Staff

ALRIGHT
Y' BUGGER,
YOU'VE HAD
YER BIT A
FUN...

NOW
IT'S TIME
FER **ME**
T' HAVE
MINE!

HE'S BACK!
GENTLEMAN ADVENTURER
SOMMERSET
STONE

JUST WHEN BEN KULMER THOUGHT THINGS COULDN'T GET ANY WORSE...

Jack Staff



PAUL GRIST
WRITER/ARTIST

ericstephenson
COLOURS



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Here's one for all you culture vultures out there.

I'm going to be appearing (well, to be honest, already appeared by the time you read this) on a panel at the Manchester Literature Festival along with Bryan Talbot, Hannah Berry and Paul Gravett on Sunday October 19th at the Whitworth Art Gallery.

FLAG WAVING

Meanwhile, Rich Johnston is putting together an exhibition of British Comic Art. This will feature pages from Watchmen, From Hell, V for Vendetta, Tamara Drew, Charles War, Dennis the Menace, Judge Dredd and many more (including Jack Staff). And where is this display of Graphic Storytelling to be found? The Tate Modern? No.

Harrods.

Yes, really. It's showing until the end of October so there may still be a few days left to run by the time you read this.

And if you did miss it, perhaps Rich can arrange some kind of UK Tesco tour for 2009?

And one more thing to recommend that's already been and gone is the documentary on Steve Ditko that was originally shown on BBC 4 and was recently repeated on BBC2. Fronted by Jonathan Ross, it was an intelligent, insightful and funny look at one of comics most eccentric talents. Despite a few statements I'd quibble with (I don't think Mark Miller was the first British writer to work on Spider-man, I think that was me - Daily Bugle 1996) and I'm not sure about the whole stalking element that crept in at the end, it's good to know that something like that can be made, thanks, I'm sure, to the clout of Jonathan Ross.

It almost makes him worth the money.

ORIGINAL ART FOR SALE

Single pages of the original black and white art for Jack Staff are available at £55 UK \$100 US each. Prices include postage. Please list alternatives in case your first choice has already gone, or contact me by e-mail if you want to check and/or reserve a page. Pages from the original Dancing Elephant issues are available as well as the Image issues! Cheques payable to Paul Grist.

e-mail : paulgrist1960@hotmail.co.uk

Dancing Elephant Press
P.O. Box 104
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ENGLAND

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NOW HERE'S AN
INTERESTING
THING...

HISTORY STUDENT
JASON DAWES
ROBS A NEWSAGENT.

BANK CLERK
JOAN YOUNG ROBS
A BETTING SHOP.

THEY ALL USED WHAT
SEEMS TO BE THE
SAME WEAPON...
WHICH HAS NEVER
BEEN FOUND.

FOUR APPARENTLY
UNCONNECTED
ARMED ROBBERIES
OVER THE LAST
THREE DAYS.

NURSERY WORKER
JENNIFER STRAW
ROBS A CITY
CENTRE CHEMIST.

ACCOUNTANT
ERIC SOUTHEY
ROBS AN OFF
LICENCE.

AND EVERYONE
DENIES ANY
INVOLVEMENT.



ANY
QUESTIONS
SO
FAR?

YES.

HOW'D
YOU GET
HOLD OF
ALL THIS
CCTV
STUFF?

THIS IS
TECHNICALLY
ILLEGAL
ISN'T
IT?





In my dream
I'm running
...

I'm not sure
if I'm
running
AWAY from
something
or if I'm
running
TOWARDS
something
...

All I
know is
I have to
keep on
RUNNING
...

As long as
I keep
running
they can't
SEE me...

can't
CATCH me...
can't
HURT me...



I trip and
fall...

No, not
falling...

There's
a metal
WEIGHT
on my
hand
...

pulling
me
down...

THE CLAW

Then I wake up

And I'm not
running
anymore.

Okay, this
looks bad.

MISTER
KULMER.
VERY
IMPRESSIVE.

MOST MEN
WOULD'VE
BIN OUT
FR ANOTHER
TEN HOURS
AT LEAST.

WE
'AVE MET
BEFORE
...

THOUGH
WE'VE NEVER
BIN WHA'
Y'D CALL
FORMALLY
INTR'DUCED.

YEAH, I
REMEMBER
YOU...*

AN'
I REMEMBER
YOU TOO
Y'THIEVIN'
LITTLE
BUGGER!

BUT, I'M
FORGETTIN'
ME MANNERS.
I EXPECT
YOU'LL BE A
LITTLE
THIRSTY.

TEA?

SOMMERSET
STONE
GENTLEMAN
ADVENTURER!



CONTINUED

IT'S CASTLETOWN'S
CAST IRON CHAMPION!



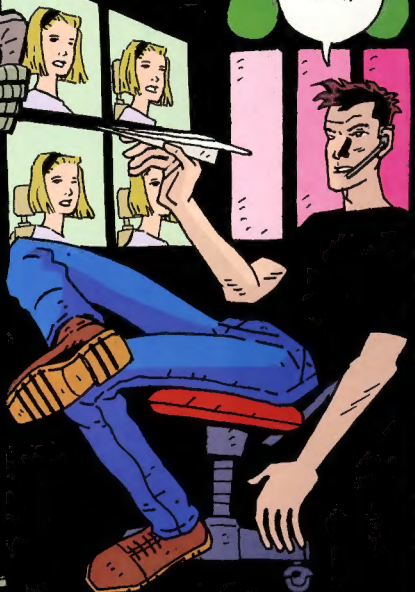
**TOM
TOM**
THE ROBOT MAN

EVERY
THING
ALRIGHT
MISTER
SMITH?

YOU
SHOULD
BE ABLE
TO MONITOR
ME ON
THE CCTV
CAMERA
NETWORK
...

NOT
HAPPY
TRISHA!

NOT
HAPPY.



OR RATHER IT'S **JOHN SMITH**
(AKA JACK STAFF, BRITAIN'S GREATEST HERO!)
STUCK IN TOM TOM THE ROBOT MAN'S
SECRET BASE WHILST **TRISHA**
CARTHY GOES OUT TO HAVE ALL THE
FUN!

WE'VE BEEN THROUGH THIS. YOU'D BE ARRESTED AS SOON AS YOU SHOW YOUR FACE ON THE STREETS...

AND QUITE FRANKLY, A GIANT ROBOT TENDS TO DRAW ATTENTION.

NOBODY TAKES MUCH NOTICE OF A GIRL IN A **WHEELCHAIR**.

TRUST ME.



WELL, I STILL DON'T **LIKE** IT.

NICE BASE YOU'VE GOT HERE BY THE WAY.

THANKS.
I CAN'T TAKE **ALL** THE CREDIT FOR IT.

IT USED TO BELONG TO **THE FOUR GOOD GUYS**.

DIDN'T YOU KNOW THEM?



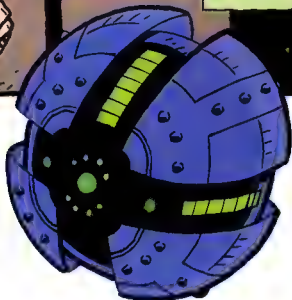
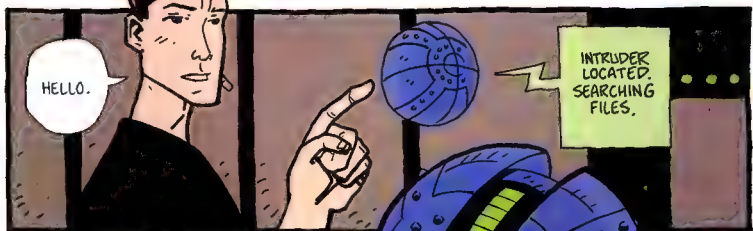
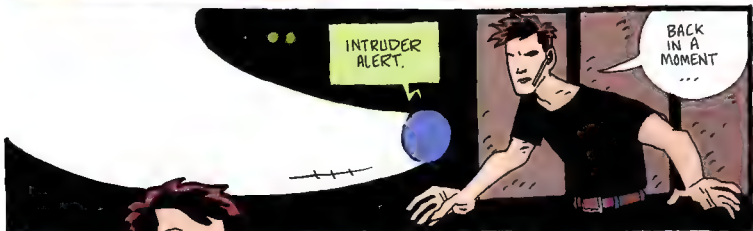
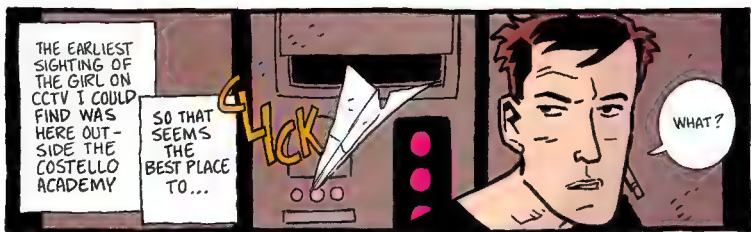
I BUMPED INTO THEM A FEW TIMES.

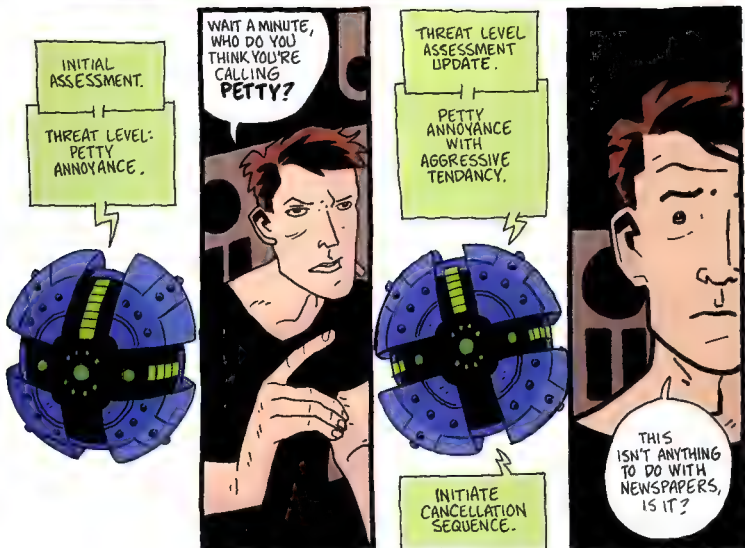
NEVER INVITED ME ROUND FOR TEA.

WELL, JUST DON'T PRESS ANY **BUTTONS** OR ANYTHING.



DON'T WORRY, I'M NOT AN **IDIOT** Y'KNOW!





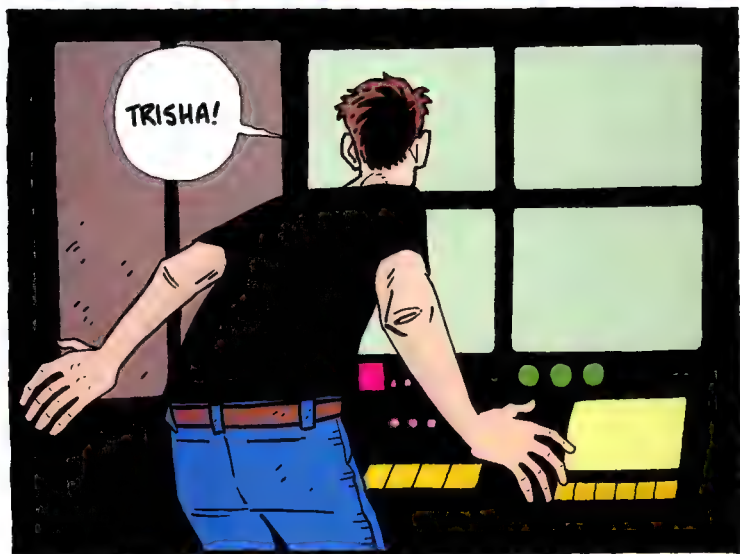


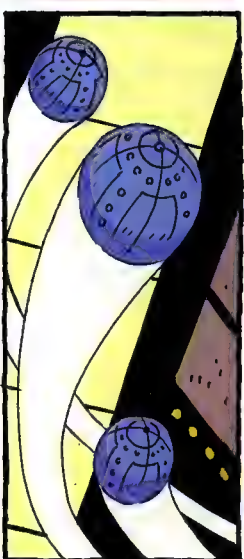
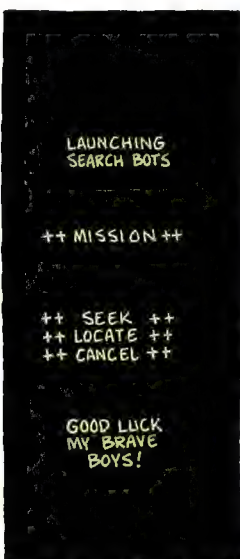
INTRUDER
THREAT
CANCELLED.

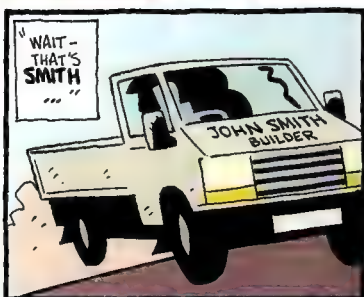
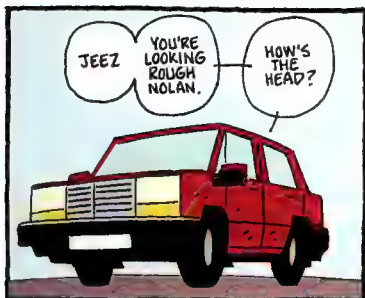


SCANNING
FOR VITAL
SIGNS.



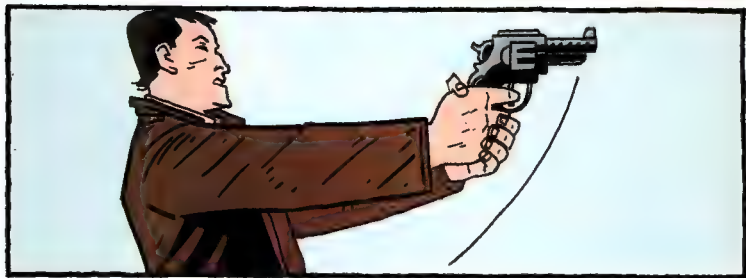
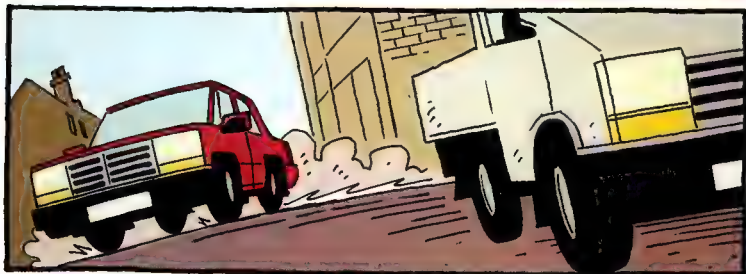
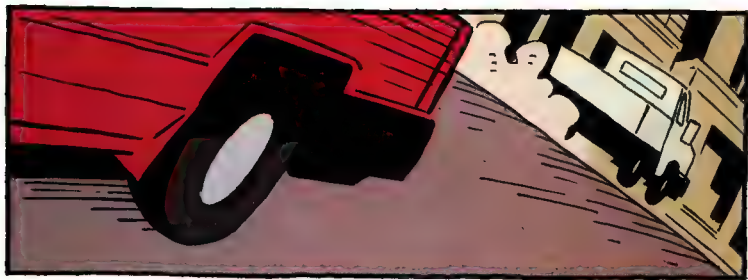






DETECTIVE INSPECTOR MAVERYK

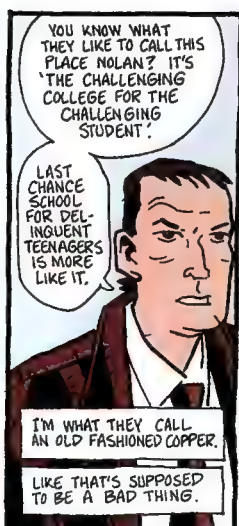






LOOKS
LIKE THIS
IS WHERE
HE WAS
HEADING
FOR.

THE
COSTELLO
ACADEMY
...



YOU KNOW WHAT
THEY LIKE TO CALL THIS
PLACE NOLAN? IT'S
'THE CHALLENGING
COLLEGE FOR THE
CHALLENGING
STUDENT'.

LAST
CHANCE
SCHOOL
FOR DEL-
INQUENT
TEENAGERS
IS MORE
LIKE IT.

I'M WHAT THEY CALL
AN OLD FASHIONED COPPER.

LIKE THAT'S SUPPOSED
TO BE A BAD THING.

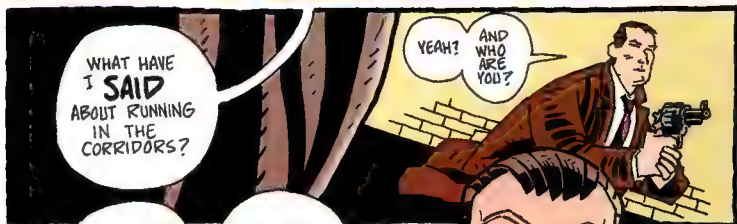


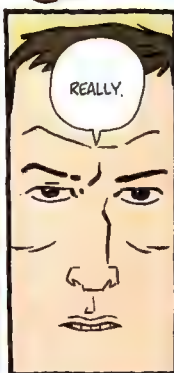
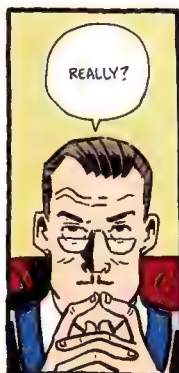
SHOULDN'T
WE CALL
THIS IN?
WAIT FOR
BACK UP?

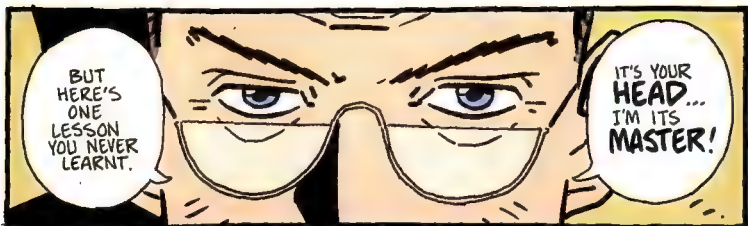
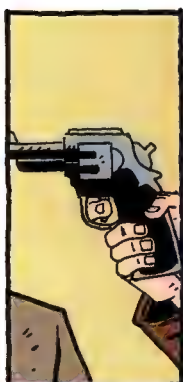
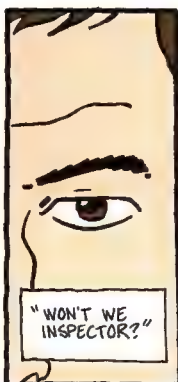
WHAT?
AND LEAVE
INNOCENT
CHILDREN AT
THE MERCY OF
A GUN
TOTING
MANIAC
...

...WHO
LIKES TO
THINK HE'S
A HERO IN
HIS OWN
MIND?

SO, MAYBE I DIDN'T
GET AN EDUCATION AT
A FANCY SCHOOL ...







CONTINUED



SCHING



MISTER
STRINGER.



I WAS
BEGINNING
TO THINK I'D
NEVER
SEE YOU
AGAIN.

Okay. NOW I'm
in TROUBLE.

CONTINUED.

STAFF POST

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e-mail paulgrist1960@hotmail.co.uk

First of all, apologies for the eye bleedin' small type on last issues letters page, this whole 'cut and paste' malarky is just so easy I kind of lost track of how much I'd done. We'll try again this again only this time with two pages!

So here's a few more selections from the Jack Staff message board which can be found at www.imagecomics.com. We start with a few comments on issue 17 featuring the collectors item first appearance of The Butler!

Oh yeah, it was great (isn't every issue?)

I loved how you had the Jack/Becky phone conversation basically bookend the issue. You do some really creative things with timing like that all time, which is one of the reasons I love Jack Staff and your writing so much.

I will be honest and say The Butler hasn't clicked with me yet, like the rest of your cast does. But still, can't wait to see where he leads the story.

Bramble Vs Son fight was everything I expected. Please, don't kill Harold.

The Adventurer

Man, that is crazy, because literally the minute I finished the issue I had to e-mail Chris Sims to tell him that if he didn't label The Butler the sensational character find of 2008, he was crazy.

You can see this idea fleshed out a little more here: <http://www.the-isb.com/?p=397>

Benito Cereno

I like Shock's memory failings: I like Jack's side of the phone call balanced near the end of the book with Becky's side of the call, I really, really like . The BUTLER!

More The Butler, please! I'm waiting for the seemingly inevitable line, answering "what happened?" we will all answer, the butler did it.

I like the additional hint that the power's not in the stick, but from within Jack Staff 'myself'. And I like Becky's refusal to cave in to Mr. I am Shadow. I'm glad for the black and white Burglar Bill, too: miss the good black and white comics, I do.

Best wishes,
Matt Levin
walking man comics

Ah, you're way ahead of me on 'the Butler did it' punchline...

Paul, you once wrote: "as I've always inked my own work I've never really differentiated between the two stages of pencils and inks. My pencils are really guidelines for the inking and I'd probably have difficulty getting someone else to understand them enough to ink them"

My question for you is this: Since you always ink all your own work, has any publisher ever given you grief about this?
The reason why I'm asking is because most publishers like Marvel, DC, or whoever, always say they need to see the pencilled version first then the inks.

How did you get into the industry doing all your own inks?

Dogma

Never really been an issue. UK artists have always tended to ink their own work as opposed to the penciller/inker breakdown of US comics. My involvement with DC and Marvel as an artist has been fairly small scale and it's been as a penciller/inker - I've already showed what my finished work looks like and that's what they're after

I think when I was doing Grendel Tales for Dark horse I did send pencils for Steve Seagle to script - but that was mainly because I was also doing the lettering so I needed to have that completed before moving onto the inking. My pencilling has probably become a little looser in the meantime.

Okay, here's a long one, so you might want to take notes. There will be questions later.

Paul, the new Image solicitations for February came out here in the U.S. last week, and there it was, Jack Staff #15, and one month after the solicitation for January's #14! So it looks like there really, really is a

monthly schedule for Jack Staff coming in the new year. Not that you were ever truly doubted, but it does make the current hiatus easier to take.

This forum here is seeing a bit less action with the lack of new issues to discuss, perhaps. So I thought I'd contribute a little by sharing my reflections on any of your best characters -- well, one of my favorite characters in any comic, actually! -- Helen Morgan.

Helen Morgan's name echoes two of the most famous femme fatales in our cultural or mythic history, Helen of Troy and Morgan le Fay. Helen doesn't seem like a femme fatale herself; however, she has an enigmatic quality that is sometimes associated with the type... and is also rather uncommon in most "adventure" characters. She possesses a melancholy side, too, that is equally intriguing.

What do we know? We know Helen leads Q, of course, and that means she works for Mr. Green, although we don't quite know how much she really knows of him. We have seen that he has appeared in her dreams, and we don't know yet how much those dreams reflect her real experiences. She has never mentioned him by name to another person.

Helen's recurring dreams (from "Echoes of Tomorrow") seem to have shown us that she suffered a terrible accident when she was fifteen. It may have involved falling from a boat and then almost drowning, something she relives in her dreams several times. Another clue in this regard may be found in the graveyard she visits in one dream: all the gravestones are the same except the one marked "Died by Drowning," which seems more prominent. This accident led to hospitalization and a coma. The narration at this point tells us that she spent six months "trapped in a coma," although it is referring to a DREAM of a coma, but still...! Besides, her mom says "You've been sleeping for a long time." Okay, technically, that was in the dream, too, so there is a degree of ambiguity. We can LIKELY trust the narration, and we can PROBABLY assume the dreams represent real events, but these are modern comics, after all, so you don't know for sure

Helen may have come from a religious family. "God has brought you back to us! Praise the Lord!" her father says. Or perhaps her father was simply using religious language to express his extreme suffering and relief, as some people do.

During her near-death experience, Helen likely was visited by Mr. Green and offered the Valiant Stone. He may have been looking for another champion after Jack Staff walked out on him. In one dream, he says, "It's just so hard getting replacements nowadays," although he may have been referring to Helen's own numerous resurrections. Mr. Green often reminds her of her bargain, as when he says, "You are Green -- That was your choice, now you do our bidding." The Valiant Stone, in another comic incarnation, made its wearer invulnerable. The shard Helen wears around her neck does not keep her from being killed, but allows her to come back to life. Her manner (as she talks about this to Harry) seems to indicate this is not a process without pain -- she may "feel" every death. At least, that she regrets her bargain with Mr. Green and wishes she could just "rest."

The graveyard shows us she's died by drowning, by fire, by explosion, by poison, by knife, by gunfire. She has also been killed by a vampire and beaten to death by police inspector, and blown up by a Starfall Squad bomb, as we all know. The trauma of these experiences has left her feeling anguished: "Let it end now. Please. I can't go on anymore.. I'm all broken up inside."

Sometimes Helen is shown sitting cross-legged with her arms at her sides, as though she is meditating. She suffers physically, but also spiritually. She feels disconnected from "the child within" -- "I haven't seen you in a while" she says to her younger dream-self -- and sometimes she gives voice to an understandable degree of bitterness. She doesn't suffer fools, although she seems to like Harry, her one confidant. She also struggles with her ties to Mr. Green, and in one dream attacks him, crying, "Never again"

Helen's work for Mr. Green involves collecting supernatural objects for Q -- and as we've found out, they are not assembling a museum, but an arsenal. She also recovered Hurricane, and enlisted Harry and Karl Stringer (aka Ben Kulmer). She tried to befriend John Smith as he helped him get out of jail, perhaps, but he reacted warily. There is a resulting antipathy between the two. When introducing Q, he says "I don't trust them."

She is similarly dismissed by Nod, when she meets him in a dream. Nod seems to be seeking out Becky, or trying to help her, but he has no time or patience for Helen. Perhaps it's because she has her green overcoat on.

Helen may work for somebody who is untrustworthy, but there's no doubt that she does some good while she's at it. She helps save Castletown from the Hurricane "epidemic" and in fact stops Hurricane himself dead in his tracks with a single word. She helps defeat the Jigsaw Man, she fights against the demon Vortil Krill, she saves the villagers of Merry. She often puts herself at risk. When push comes to shove, she sacrifices herself in the struggle with the symbiotic plant spores.

Helen has great powers. She sends a psychic projection to Karl Stringer, she possesses Jack Staff in order to have him battle the Jigsaw Man. In "The Ward World of Jack Staff" she even stops time. She takes pride in her powers and in what she accomplishes with them, particularly when she helps protect innocent lives: "Saved the world... I'm on fire tonight!" As she puts it, she's the babysitter when "God's got the evening off."

There is a link between Helen and Becky, as they have appeared in each other's dreams... although they seem to have not met yet in real life. They are both struggling with their supposed roles in the supposed war that is coming. Mr Green says there are no bystanders, and that does certainly seem to be true so far.

Jack Staff firmly believes that Mr Green doesn't have any one's best interests at heart. Clearly, Helen has her doubts, too. One of the biggest questions of the evolving story in "Jack Staff" is how "God's babysitter" will act... when the war is upon her.

Steve Replogue

Obviously, I'm not going to comment on this, but I just want to point out (because I probably haven't made this clear), but Helen doesn't work for Mister Green, but they are both agents of The Green. Exactly what Mister Green is up to nowadays is a whole other story.

Paul, of course the above just represents my thoughts on how I've read the stories, and is not meant as anything conclusive. I wouldn't presume! I tried to use words like "perhaps" and "possibly" a lot but probably could have put more in there. Your statement about The Green versus Mr. Green shows clearly that I don't always know what I'm talking about...!

Steve Replogue

Well, I can see how you'd think that Mr Green is The Green, as it certainly seems, from what we've seen so far, that he's the most prominent and/or powerful of The Green's agents. The idea that he's the head honcho is an understandable one when you consider how he operates; Mr Green doesn't confront his enemies directly, rather he tries to get people to work for him. That could be seen as the tactic of a leader, or merely of someone who doesn't want to get his hands dirty.

Then again, do the Q bods work for Q, or do they work for Helen Morgan?

Kelvin Green

Here's a question that seems to crop up every few months...

Hi I was looking at some of the older British characters and what I really wanna know is what characters are based on the older British characters. I was surprised Zipper Nolan was based on Zip Nolan. I like these characters and kinda wanted to read into them more, I have already picked up some older issues of Lion at cons.

As far as everything here is what I know. Zipper Nolan = Zip Nolan; Hurricane = Captain Hurricane, The Spider = Spider; Tom Tom the Robot Man = Robot archie; The Claw = The Steel Claw.

Could I get more insight as to if DI Maveryk is based on another British character, or if there is any I missed

Buzz86us

Zipper Nolan doesn't really have much in common with the motorcycle cop Zip Nolan beyond the names. Maveryk is not really from a comic source it's more the typical shouty maverick policeman you get on a lot of police shows - eg Sweeney, Life on Mars (yes, I know it's a parody!) He's also the typical superhero hating cop (see Dai Thomas in early Captain Britains).

As for others, Charlie Raven is based on Janus Stark, whilst The Eternal Warrior is based on Adam Eterno (and I hope we're all clear on that one).

Oh and then the Valiant Stone is based on Kelly's Eye

I think that pretty much covers it - I've seen links made to some other characters, and whilst there may be similarities it's very rarely intentional. Yes, Sgt States is surprisingly similar to Captain America, but I'm just dealing with UK comic characters here.

I'm not planning on using any more old UK comic characters as basis for future Jack Staff characters - I've pretty much got all my favourites in there and I want to get away from this idea that some people have that you have to have arcane knowledge of all the old british comics in order to understand what Jack Staff is about. It was just meant to be a little bit of fun for those who remembered them!

Damn! I could have sworn that Morlan the Mystic was based on the urban legend about a bearded warlock/anarchist who roams the streets of Northampton, knows the secrets of the Universe and worships a Roman Snake god! But maybe I'm reading too much into things again..

Graham Pearce

It's just a kraazy coincidence. Happens all the time. You know, there are some people who think Jack Staff is based on Union Jack. Kraazy.

Here's a post which came via e-mail commenting on issue 18...

Well, another blinder of an issue. If only things were starting to make sense)

I love the "as weekly" look - very nostalgic for me you know - i just wish you could publish as weekly so i selfishly didn't have to wait for the next one...

and i knew there HAD to be an explanation for Jade Goodey!

ta very much,

Neil

byethesa33@tesco.co.uk

Here's another essay from Steve (he's a teacher in case you were wondering) commenting on the Beats cards which ran in some earlier issues. There's still a couple more of these I can use on the message board...

So, BEATS. It's been a fun addition to the regular comic, and missed for the last few issues. But what does it tell us about Jack Staff and his chums?

Well, we've learned that the most powerful characters are Hurricane, Shock, Tommy Twister, The Eternal Warrior, and Jack Staff himself. They each get a 10 on the power scale. All the scales for BEATS seem to run from 1 to 10. Those scores are not too surprising, really, as the characters are all clearly quite powerful in their different ways. But this is a bit of a surprise, I think General Tubbs also gets a 10 rating! Watch out for that kid!

Hmmmm. Only slightly older than Becky back during the Hurricane incident, Tubbs must also be a grownup now...

The highest hero ratings go to The Eternal Warrior, Tom Tom the Robot Man, and again, our hero Jack. Seems about right. It's interesting that Mister Green gets a higher hero rating than several characters. He gets a 6 - equal to Charlie Raven and Doctor Spex - while Helen Morgan herself gets a 5, the same as Shadow. Thus is perhaps a glimpse into Helen's conflicted role in the proceedings. The pure villains earn appropriately low rankings on the hero scale: Alfred Chinard and Hurricane both get a 2, Shock gets a 3, and Doc Tempest gets a 1. The Claw gets a 4.

Becky Burdock is one of the most intelligent characters. She earns a 10 ranking while Jack himself only gets an 8. Morlan the mystic earns a 10, too, and so does Alfred Chinard. That's as it should be. Lots of characters are smarter than Jack. Charlie Raven, Mr. Green, Shadow, Doctor Spex, Helen Morgan, Commander Hawkes, and Harry Crane all rate a 9.

But here's the smartest of them all... Tom Tom the Robot Man! Isn't that surprising? Yep, Trisha Carthy earns an amazing 12 on the 1-to-10 scale for intelligence. We should watch out for that kid, too, I guess

I find her incredibly high score somehow fitting. I wonder what Morlan or Alfred would have to say about it?

Another point about intelligence: The Eternal Warrior doesn't seem to be that smart, having just a 5 rating. Of course, Shock comes in at 4, not much higher than Hurricane, the lowest at 2. That must be a bit embarrassing for him. Maybe Shock has suffered from too many power overloads. The Eternal Warrior, too, seems to have been pretty worn down by all his battles over the eons... he's a fighter, more instinctual than thoughtful. Still, it was a neat trick, the way he drove the Tesco demon out of himself.

The ratings for strength, agility, and endurance are about what you'd expect for all the given characters. Older guys like Alfred, Harry, and Albert aren't so agile as they probably used to be. Tommy and Glory are a bit lower in endurance, which fits with how they quickly they were each taken out in the Invasion of Castletown. Dr. Spex has the lowest endurance at 5, and come to think of it, The Claw did take care of him pretty decisively when the two of them met.

Hurricane gets a 10 for strength, naturally. The Eternal Warrior also gets a 10 for strength, too, so they would make an interesting match-up. They both overpower Jack at 9, which brings another perspective to his conflicts with each of them in "Soldiers" and "Echoes From Tomorrow."

That's it for now. There are some more BEATS to come, so it will be fun to see who is represented and what scores they earn. Perhaps we'll see Sergeant States or Templar Richard. There's also The Druid, Nod, and Jim Bones. Zipper or Maveryk are perhaps unlikely choices, as they are just a couple of normal guys. But then so are the Brambles... and you have to wonder about Zipper, anyway. He does have some special qualities, no doubt about that. There's also Captain Kreg and Brain Head, and now, new folk like Sommerset Stone and George from the Starfall Squad. I think it's unlikely that we'll see cards for Gerald Skinner or Lynda Jones!

Steve Replogue

The Hero rating was basically a measure of how reliable that person would be if it was a 'backs to the wall' situation and they were on your side... Helen Morgan has her own agenda going off hence the 5 rating. Unfortunately space restrictions have pushed the Beats cards out recently, but I'm hoping to have some more in issue 21.

NEXT ISSUE

28 pages of action as we learn the secret of the Claw and Maveryk and Nolan learn that schooldays are not always the happiest days of your life!

Burglar Bill

THE STORY SO FAR...

WYBOURN THOUGHT HE WAS JUST STEALING A CAR RADIO WHAT HE DIDN'T KNOW WAS THAT THE CAR RADIO BELONGED TO THE TWO KINGS OF THE GRAPPLE RING, THE SPIDER AND THE MASKED MARVEL.

THROUGH A TWISTY CHAIN OF EVENTS, THE CAR RADIO ENDS UP IN THE OFFICES OF THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER FROM WHICH WYBOURN AND BILL HAVE TO RECOVER IT—ALONG WITH THE CASSETTE TAPE IT CONTAINED.

MEANWHILE...

COUNCIL LEADER GREY STONES WAITS ANXIOUSLY IN THE (SOON TO BE CLOSED) CITY HALL.

NOW READ ON...

I HOPE I HAVEN'T KEPT YOU WAITING TOO LONG.



I AM THE SPIDER.

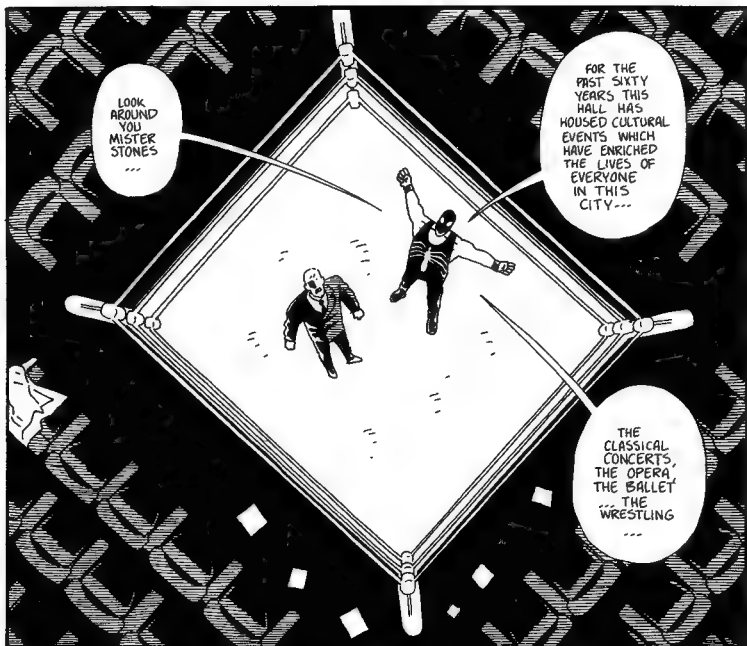


WHAT IS THIS? IS THIS SOME KIND OF JOKE?

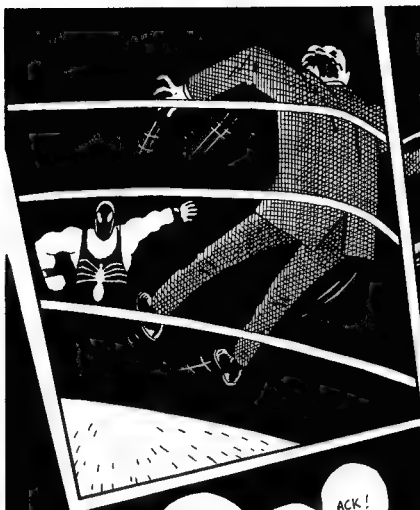


THIS IS NO LAUGHING MATTER MISTER STONES.









--AH--
ACK!

ACK!

ACK!

ACK!

ALRIGHT -
WHAT DO
YOU WANT?
MONEY?

A
FREE
BUS
PASS?

I JUST
WANT AN
UNDERSTANDING
ABOUT THE
FUTURE OF
THE CITY
HALL.

I WANT
A REPRIEVE.
I WANT
IT KEPT
OPEN.

BUT ---
THIS PLACE IS
FALLING APART
- IT'S GOING TO
TAKE NEARLY A
MILLION POUNDS
JUST TO BRING
THE WIRING UP
TO SAFETY
STANDARD.

THE CITY
CAN'T
AFFORD
TO KEEP
THE HALL
OPEN...

WATCH
MY LIPS
MISTER
STONES.

READ
MY
SEMA-
PHORE.

THE
QUESTION
IS NOT
'CAN THE
CITY AFFORD
TO KEEP IT
OPEN?'

BUT
'CAN YOU
AFFORD
TO LET IT
CLOSE?'



I'M LISTENING
BUT ALL I'VE
HEARD ARE
ACCUSATIONS
...

I
HAVEN'T
HEARD ANY
PROOF
THAT WHAT
YOU SAY
IS TRUE.



WELL
HEAR THIS
MISTER
STONES
...



CLICK
Whirr



YOO DOHNT
KNOW WHUTS
GOWIN ON
-- YOOVE BIN
AHWAY
FUH FAH
TOO LONG

YOO CAHNT
KUM
BACK - AN
THINK
YAH AHR
STILL
THERE

YUR
AHT UV
TUCH
MAH BAYBEE
(bop bop)
MAH POUR
DISKARDED
BAYBEE
(bop bop)

AH SED
BAYBEE
BAYBEE
BAYBEE
YUHRE
AHT UV
THYME

WELL
BAYBEE
BAYBEE
BAYBEE
YUHRE
AHT UV
THYME

AH SED
BAYBEE
BAYBEE
BAYBEE
YUHRE
AHT UV
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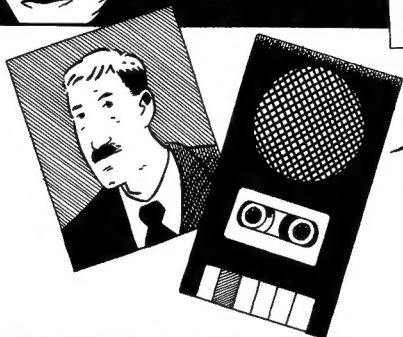
YES
YOO
AHR
LEFT
AHT

AHT
UV THER
WITH
AHT AH
DOWT

CUZ
BAYBEE
BAYBEE
BAYBEE

YUHR
AHT
UV
THYME





NEXT: TYING UP THE LOOSE ENDS



CAUGHT

**IN
THE**

FLOOD